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Dr. Joshua Lederberg
c/o San Francisco Chronicle
San Francisco, California

Dear Dr. Lederberg:

I read with interest your article on fluoridation of public water supplies in the Chronicle on March 23rd, 1969.

This has been a problem for obstetricians because we are being pushed to have fluoride prenatal capsules. I have solved this problem for myself by simply not prescribing it prenatally but urging the patient to discuss the problem with the Pediatrician so that the newborn baby could be supplied fluoride after birth. Inasmuch as the dentine lay down late in pregnancy, it would appear that the newborn gets practically all of the benefit of fluoride if it is given shortly after birth, sparing the mother the possibility of genetic problems etc. from fluoride during pregnancy.

Your paragraph stating "My own summary judgement would be to acquiesce in a community decision for fluoridation, with regrets, but accepting the argument that leaving the matter to individual choice would in practice deprive many children of a positive benefit", does not necessarily express the true situation. No child needs to be deprived of fluoride, there are numerous commercial preparations on the market such as Adeflor by Upjohn and Tri-Vi-Flor and Poly-Vi-Flor which retails for about \$1.10 a month and supply multi-vitamins plus added fluoride. If the family is in financial straits fluoride chewable tablet or drops are available in lots of 1,000 tablets at a cost of about \$3.00 or \$4.00 which would be a two or three year supply. All these preparations are also on welfare.

Sociologically it is hard to know what is fair, but certainly any individual in this country who wants fluoride can have it at an extraordinarily reasonable cost. As you point out, those people that are on artificial kidney machines and who have other medical reasons for not having fluoridated water, will be forced to supply their water outside of the public water supply which would be extraordinarily expensive over a period of time.

There isn't any question that all is not known about fluoride also.

Very sincerely yours,

Robert G. Brown, M.D.
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